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There is now no turning, for the three hunters, rapidly closing up, urge them from behind, with shouts and the waving of their flags.

AUTUMN FANCIES

BY MALCOLM TAYLOR, JR.

Not did Fancy, but did Chance lie,
Drew my heedless footsteps here,
Where, self only, yet not lonely,
Muse I on the waning year,
Neath the umbrage of the foliage,
Scarlet, yellow, brown and sere.

Some weird fancy does entrance me,
Making, like as in a dream,
Lover, lover, lover,
Like as frost fairies seem
Dancing, leaping, timed-step keeping,
To the music of the stream.

Strange the fancy, leaves do glance, see!
Rainbow hues reflecting bright,
Autumn's glowing richness showing,
Seemingly lively to the sight;
Yet, though the leaves are pining
Neath the touch of dying blight.

This sad fancy does advance free,
Leaves are leaves of golden glow,
That, when living, luster giving,
Serve a cheering light to throw,
But when brightest fell fate smites,
Crushing all beneath the blow.

The Mustangers:

A TALE OF THE CROSS TIMBERS.

BY CAPTAIN MAYNE REID.

AUTHOR OF "HEADLESS HORSEMAN," "SCALP-HUNTERS," "LONE RANCH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE MUSTANG-DRIVE.

A drove of wild horses, numbering over an hundred head. Of all colors—jet-black and snow-white; bay, sorrel and roan; steel-gray and spotted. They are moving across a prairie—a Texan prairie—near the eastern edge of the "Lower Cross-Timbers," along the side of a stream that, some ten miles below, becomes tributary to the Trinity river. The banks of the stream are steep and sheer, and the current between runs strong and swift. On that side it guides the course of the *caballada*; for the horses will not dare to cross it. On their other flank is the prairie, smooth and open. At intervals they turn their heads toward it, as if desirous of betaking themselves in that direction. Something restrains them; and they continue on down the bank of the stream.

A traveler, coming suddenly within sight of this herd, would be struck with a singularity in their appearance and movements. Instead of scouring the plain at a canter, or quick gallop—as is their wont—they are moving at a slow pace. Now and then it livens into a trot, or, at times, a brisker walk, as though flies were urging them on. But soon they subside into the old, bigging gait, going on with apparent reluctance.

Under ordinary circumstances, wild horses, when encountered on the prairie, are seen either at rest or in full career—rearing and cavorting, with heads erect,

curved necks, and tails sweeping horizontally behind them. The behavior of the *caballada* in question is altogether different. There is not a curving neck or raised tail among them. On the contrary, their heads are down and drooping; their eyes dull; their flanks hollow, and their limbs dragging after them, as if each and all had been just loosened out of harness, after a prolonged spell of plowing. They look tired, jaded, dejected. They look as if they were being driven!

And this is just what they are—their drivers appearing in the form of three horsemen, coming up behind, at wide distances apart. Not horsemen, either, for the men thus mentioned are mounted on large, strong mules.

To a novice on the Texan prairies, this tableau would appear strange. On first viewing it, he could not give credence to his senses. A herd of wild horses—the wildest and shyest animals in existence—driven tamely along by three men mounted upon mules—slow mules, from which, at a single dash, they might escape; and over their own uninhabited, infallible pastures, where they might retreat to any distance, even beyond the range of vision and the danger of pursuit. It would, indeed, seem incredible. But the explanation is easy.

The men coming behind are *mustangers*—hunters of the wild horse by profession. They know all his haunts and habits, and can make him their captive without using either the rifle or lasso. They have long marked the herd they are now following, and made themselves acquainted with its habitat—it's "range" of pasturing, and its places for watering. On a given day they have started it in full chase, themselves following slowly after, each leading two spare mules. The wild horse, when first pursued, does not retreat in a direct line, but in wide, sweeping circles, returning again near to his point of departure. Sometimes he does not even go out of sight, but gallops back, as if moved by a spirit of defiance, or yielding to curiosity. In this way he soon fatigues himself, making fifty miles while the pursuer may have to travel only ten.

The mustanger, husbanding the strength of his animals, by his provident relays, soon overhauls the herd, starting it off into a fresh run. Again he takes the shorter diagonal, and again comes up with it—repeating the movement until the wild steeds begin to lose spirit under the implacable pursuit. They are, by this time, beginning to feel fatigued, after having made so many idle and out-of-the-way courses. They are getting hungry, too, in their haste not having been permitted to pasture. They will be thirsty also, and, perhaps, make a break for some distant watering-place, well known to the mustanger, who follows them at his best speed, generally taking a shorter route than they. He sometimes arrives in time to hinder them from drinking, but always to prevent their browsing—or, at least, filling their bellies.

Once more the pursuit is continued, though now in a more direct line, for the steeds are tired, and have no relish for scampering. They are hungry, too, and try to graze as they move onward. But they are not permitted. While grasping at the herbage beneath their feet, they hear the relentless pursuers behind, who make themselves heard in time, and the grass remains just loosened out of harness, after a prolonged spell of plowing. They look tired, jaded, dejected. They look as if they were being driven!

Night comes on. Still, this brings no relief to them—no cessation to that never-ending, never-tiring pursuit. All night long are they compelled to move on, without a moment of rest, and scarce a morsel of food. And when day again breaks over the broad prairie, the hunters are there be-

hind, and the fence converges toward the bank, and the passage becomes so narrow, that the *caballada* gets crowded. But there is an open country beyond; and making through this, they once more break into a feeble gallop, in hopes of at last escaping from their relentless pursuers. Two or three hundred yards, and they only bring their breasts in contact with an obstruction—that same crooked arrangement of split timbers, that has already perplexed them. They press their counters against it; but it is strong, and will not yield. They run around it, neighing wildly. They find no outlet on any side. If they return to where they entered, they will find none there; for the mustangers have, in the mean time, dismounted from their mules, and from a pile of rails—placed there for the purpose—have completed the inclosure of the corral.

CHAPTER II.

CHOOSING A SITE.

"HALT!"
The command came from a tall, military-looking man, of middle age, mounted upon a horse, that in size corresponded to him. It was not addressed to soldiers, but simply to the negro driver of a Conestoga wagon; which, drawn by four large mules, was slowly making its way along the smooth level of the prairie.

Colonel William Magoffin was the name of the man who gave the order. Had he been only Mr. Magoffin, he would have said "pull up," but, being a veteran officer of the Jackson wars, his military habits still adhered to him—along with some of the language to which soldiers are accustomed.

At a sonorous "wo—la!" from their stableman, the mules instantly came to a stand—as did also a similar wagon in its rear, and a "Dearborn," drawn by a pair of light, wiry horses. Two other horsemen, who rode alongside the wagon, halted at the same time; and, soon after, six black pedestrains, driving about a dozen head of cattle, came up in the rear of all.

The spectacle thus presented was one not uncommon upon the prairies—being that of an emigrant party on its way to a new settlement.

However, it was very uncommon—in fact, had never been before seen—in the district where the wagons were now drawn up; for those of Colonel Magoffin were the first whose white tilts had ever gleamed amid the green leaves of these singular groves, known as the "Cross Timbers" of Texas.

That this emigrant party came from some Southern State was evinced by the black teamsters; and, also, the sable pedestrians tending the cattle in the rear. A glance

brought to view several female faces, of various hue, ranging from pale saffron to ebony black; and beside them, half a score other faces of smaller size betokening the usual accompaniment of "picannines."

In the "Dearborn" were two young girls, both fair and white—ladies, at a glance. Of the horsemen, one was a man of large frame, and tall as the colonel himself—though his coarser garb, and generally more rugged exterior, bespoke him only a retainer. The other, a young man, who had shown his twentieth year, in his features showed some family resemblance—enough to be taken for his nephew; and such, in reality, he was.

The two female occupants of the traveling-carriage were the colonel's daughter, Tennessee, and niece, Louisiana. The names may sound strange thus bestowed. It is not an uncommon practice, for, among families in the Southern States west, as in the Southern States east, we find young ladies called "Carolina," "Virginia," and even "Florida."

Colonel Magoffin was an old-stock Tennessee, whose father had come into the country with the Robertsons, Bradfords and Hardings: hence the name patriotically given to his bright, fair-haired daughter. His nephew and niece were the children of a sister, who had found a husband and a home further south, in the lovely land of Louisiana. This will explain the darker complexion and more delicate features of the young Creole girl, who called Tennessee Magoffin her cousin; and whose own name in full was Louisiana Dupre.

Despite the variety of individuals composing the emigrant party, there was sufficient homogeneity to show that it was one family, of which Colonel Magoffin was the head.

The spot where they had halted was a level plain, with a gentle declination toward the south; and a surface that looked more like a grand garden of flowers than a stretch of wild, uncultivated prairie. There were copes of timber, standing at some distance apart; for they were still outside the selavage of the great grove, known as the Cross Timbers. The copes were the outlying islets that here and there fringe these greater belts of forest-land, extending far across the prairie sea.

"This spot looks like it would do," said the colonel, as soon as the wagons had come to a stop; "I don't see any use in our going further. What do you say, Mr. Strother?"

"Wal," replied the individual thus addressed, who was the tall man, habited in copper-colored homespun, with a rifle of six feet over his left shoulder. "I don't see as you can do any better. That's a river, out o' which we can draw any amount of water; and that's plenty o' ground that needs no clarin—not the stroke o' an ax. Once we plowed up them weeds, I guess we'll get good cotton out o' it; and," he continued, looking with increased interest

across the river, "thar on t'other side ar' plenty o' timmer, whar there shed be b'ar and deer—to say nothing about squirrel and turkey. I guess, squire, you can't do better than to *eat* jest whar we've pulled up."

"What do you say, Eugene? The ground looks good, for either cotton or tobacco; and I think we're far enough south for sugar. What's your opinion?"

The speaker turned round to his nephew, who, being a Louisianian, was expected to know all about the soil that would be suitable for the sugar-cane. But Eugene had also turned round, and ridden up to the Dearborn, inside which was something sweeter to his thoughts—his fair cousin, Tennessee.

Baffled, the colonel also approached the wagon, and put the question to all together: how they would like to settle on that spot?

"Charming!" exclaimed the impulsive Tennessee; "we can have splendid bouquets and garlands of flowers—only for the gathering!"

"It is a very beautiful country," simply remarked her cousin, over whose young face could be detected a shade of melancholy—almost sadness.

"Do you think it will grow sugar, Eugene?" again asked Colonel Magoffin, addressing himself to the elegant young Creole, in sky-blue cottonade, and Panama hat.

"I don't think it would, uncle," was the discouraging answer; "it's a little too far north. But what matters, so long as you can grow cotton? Remember, a pound of cotton is worth more than one of sugar; and here, I think, the chief question will be about transporting the produce to a market."

"That's so," said the colonel. "Well, it'll give us cotton, sure; and corn for the niggers, and the horses. Till we can raise our own hog-meat, we must live upon venison, with now and then a bear-ham, and a breast of turkey; so that we may be as well off in the old house in Tennessee."

Magoffin said this with something like a sigh; for he remembered that, in the "old house in Tennessee," he had been surrounded with every comfort, until that time when a too-generous heart, leading to a too-profuse hospitality, had brought the bailiff to his gates, and left him almost landless and niggerless—his attenuated sable following being all that was left of a plantation counting over two hundred hands. Still the new movement was not disagreeable to him, but rather the reverse. He was of that migratory stock who can not dwell contented, except on the furthest frontier. Originally of the East Tennessee settlement, they had gone on to Nashville, in the center—and thence to Memphis in the west. Here again, the houses had become too thick, and the country too closely fenced around them. Therefore, the colonel—though with the loss of over three-fourths of his property—was glad to escape from the so-called increasing civilization, and seek a home in some land where the first fence-rail had not yet been split. He was to find it in the country of the Cross Timbers; and the spot where his wagon had halted seemed the very place he would have chosen for a home.

He chose it.

CHAPTER III.

A COMRADE SUSPECTED.

"I don't like him, Ed; I don't like him. This chile can't feel a freeze frost that fell—nor how can fix it?"

"For that matter, Wash, I don't like him myself. But we agreed to his coming out with us."

"Who agreed? Not me—durned ef I did. Jest t'otherways. I war all ag'in it. I never know'd three fellurs go trappin' or huntin' together, thet that war'n't quarrels an' consiprin' amon' 'em; an' one o' the three war boun' to be in the meinority. On the purair, jest as when you go coatin' a gurl, three's no kumpany. Remember what I tol' ye, that we'd be better to 'a' left him behin'; an' let himoller his own trail; but you wud' hev him along."

"I admit I spoke in favor of his coming. He wanted so bad to be with us."

"Not so bad to be long wi' us in purickler. Twarn't that? Ef this chile ain't mistook, what he wanted wus to git clear out o' the settlements—anyhow, an' anywhere. Thar's somethin' ag'in' him that wus than a que-bill."

"You think so?"

"Sure o't—next thing to sure. Don't ye recollect, when we wus stayin' in Nacodoches, how fidgy he war on the arrival o' every party o' emigrants, an' whenever anybody rid up to the tavern? He 'peared to be keepin' a sharp look-out for a balfiff—an' that's jest what he war doin', I reck'n."

"He may have committed a forgery, you think?"

"He's committed wuss than that, I shed say."

"But what makes you fancy so?"

"I've got my reasuns. Men don't ramble in such sleep—as I've heern him do, more'n once—because they've wrote thar name what he warn't oughter. My word for it, Ed Thormley, that's blood on that fellur's hands."

"It's a pity we brought him with us. Even if it isn't as you suspect, the suspicion of it makes me feel unpleasant. Besides, he hasn't turned out much of a cheerful companion. After all, it's gettin' to be ticklish times between us and these Indians. They don't appear to like our horse-hunting about here; and if we should come to have trouble with them, three rifles would be better than two."

"I don't know 'bout that. They mount, an' they mount. Hain't ye noticed how this kumrade o' ours takes out to thar young savage, Tiger-Tail, an' his Seminoles? Ef it warn't for the diff'rent color o' thar hides, you mout think they war a kipple o' born brothers; while all the time the Injun's been sulky an' ugly wi' both o' us. Don't like it a bit. This chile hev heerd o' white renegades, an' know'd o' some as betrayed thar kumrades to the Injuns. Sech hev been men as hev committed murder in the settlements, and dasen't go back thar. This fellur mout be one o' the kind; an' I feel sort o' sure he is."

"Still, why should he betray us?"

"Why? Wal, one thing why, we've got a good gatherin' o' horses now. Our cavalry down among the plantashuns, shed fetch, leastways, a kipple o' thousand dollars. We've got enuf to make a trip wi' right away. An' yit he ain't a-goin' to the settlements along wi' us. I kin tell that from his talk. He means stayin' out hyar, 'mong the Injuns; an', to git well in wi' them, he mout take a notion to make 'em a present o' our mustangs. They ked trapeze 'em off as well as we kin."

"In that case, Wash, the sooner we get

off the better. We had best take the horses to Nacodoches."

"So this chile's been thinkin'; an' I guess I kin tell why you want to go to that place. Thar's a gurl ye want to see, Ed."

"No, as I assure you, nothing of the kind. Think my stars, I'm as free of all such entanglements as you yourself, Wash."

"Wal, that's free enuf! This chile hasn't had a scrape wi' weemem since he wun up trappin' 'mong the Crows, an' campin' at Fort Laramie. I hed a squaw thar; an' I swore she shed be the last I'd ever let cling onto me. What wi' her fondness for *fang-farow* an' rot-gut whisky, she ate an' drunk up the peerless o' a hul' winter's trappin' on the head-waters o' the Platte. No more squaw wives for me—nor weemem o' any kind!"

"Ha! ha!" laughed his younger companion. "Well, that's no reason why we shouldn't soon start for the settlements. There are other pleasures there that I know will attract you."

"Thar's the pleasure o' sellin' our horses, an' gittin' the shiners for 'em. Soon as we've got this last lot tamed to drivin', we'll start right away for the settlements—whether this fellur go wi' us or not. He kin take his choice 'bout that, an' keep his share o' the horses. He ain't entitled to a third o' them, by rights; for he hain't been great help to us—tuk up as he is with Tiger-Tail an' his brown-skinned beauties. Wagh! how I do despise any white man that puts himself on an even wi' an Injun!"

CHAPTER IV.

AN UNWELCOME SIGHT.

The conversation detailed in the preceding chapter occurred between two men, mounted on mules, and riding across an open stretch of prairie. They were two of the *mustangers* described as having made a capture of the wild-horse herd, by driving them into a corral. It was just after they had completed the inclosure; and they were now on their way to the hut that served all three as a home, in order to provide ropes, and other gear, for breaking the wild steeds—as also to obtain a fresh supply of provisions. The third had been left by the corral, to see to the captured stock. It was he who had been the subject of their conversation, and was the object of their suspicions.

Their names were, respectively, Edward Thormley and Washington Carroll—or "Wash," as his comrade called him for short. Between them there was almost as much dissimilarity as could be between any two individuals of the same race, engaged in a common calling. Physically, morally, intellectually, were they unlike one another.

Wash Carroll—the elder—was a small man, thin in face, as in person; dark of complexion; tough as tan leather; and tight as strung wire. Although perfectly honest in all dealings with men of his own color, he was not so just when it was a matter between him and *red-skins*—or even the Church; for, in a religious point of view, Wash—or "Old Wash" as his comrade called him—was something of a sinner. He was not so very old—fifty being about the number of winters he could look back upon. He was by no means of comely aspect; and his countenance—though of a cast that bespoke cunning rather than sinister thought—was not improved by the scars of an old cut, that traversed across his left cheek, from mouth to ear. By birth a Tennesseean, he had been by profession a trapper; but now that beaver "pew" had faltered to so low a price, he had forsaken the trapper's calling, and taken to that of a mustanger. He had spent the latter portion of his life upon the prairies of Texas, in pursuit of this singular occupation.

His comrade was a person of totally different characteristics. A handsome young Virginian, he had strayed down to Texas; and with Wash, had come out to the Cross Timbers—not so much to make money by following the profession of horse-hunter, as through an innate love of frontier life, and a longing for the adventures that render it attractive, despite its perils and hardships. The present expedition was his first trip upon the prairies. In the romantic old town of Nacodoches he had made the acquaintance of Carroll; and a bargain of partnership had been struck between them. While preparing to set forth alone, a third individual had presented himself, so earnestly eager to accompany them, that, although the old hunter had at first made objections, his younger and more enthusiastic companion had overruled him, and the stranger volunteer was accepted.

He was a young man of about the same age as Thormley himself, who gave his name as Louis Lebar, and said he was from the State of Louisiana. He was the one about whose honesty the two now entertained the suspicions imparted to each other in their conversation. From the first introduction, Wash Carroll had conceived them, and all along felt aversion to the man.

The appearance of Lebar was not in his favor. He was short and thick-set, with shoulders slightly stooping. His complexion was dark as that of a mulatto; and a heavy beard, left to grow at will, made him look still darker. In his eye there was a restlessness, and its glance was, at times, almost wolfish. Carroll's dislike for him had other reasons. He had heard utterances of a compromising kind—murderings made by the stranger in his sleep—which occurred the word "murder." Wash, lying awake and listening, had heard this ominous expression, and drawn from it sinister conclusions.

The two had ceased conversing about him, and were now riding on toward the hut, that for several weeks had served them for a home. It was a rude structure of logs, which they had erected against a rocky bluff, overlooking a branch of the Trinity river—about a mile below the place where they had constructed their corral. They had got near to it, and were riding quickly along the bank of the stream, when Wash—whose eyes were ever on the alert—suddenly jerked up his mule, with the exclamation:

"Look that!"

"Where?" inquired Thormley.

"Thar, down the bank o' the stream. Don't ye see somethin'?"

"Yes—I see somethin' white, like the canvas o' a tent."

"Tent be durned! Taint nothin' o' the kind. It's the tilt o' a waggin."

"A waggin! Out here?"

"It air—dog-gone to it!"

"And if so, why should it displease you to see it?"

"Displease! Durn it, I've been runnin' away from that sign all o' my life, an' now, I suppose, I've got to fit furrer. I

just made tracks from near Nashville, whar this chile war kitteren, to West Tennessee. Thar I war follered by waggin's, an' arter them, horses. Then on to North Mississippi, whar the waggin's an' horses kin clost arter Choctaw Purchase. I then tried Arkansaw, on t'other side. No use. Thar, too, soon appeared the cussed waggin's, an' claims, an' cabins—an' long wi' em, frame houses. I put off South, for Loozyanny, on Red River bottom. More waggin's, an' more buildin's. Then, by way o' durner raysort—as the Loozyanny Creoles calls it—struck out hyar, for Texas. What's the use? Thar's the waggin ag'in—

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though it were a little tableau got up for her express amusement. Her horse's hoofs on the soft turf had been noiseless; so they had not heard her approach. Stepping back, Disbrowe took off his hat, and shook back his clustering hair off his flushed face, and glanced around before speaking. Saladin stood snorting and pawing the ground with terror, at a little distance; Jacinto lay on his face senseless at his feet, his coat-sleeve saturated with blood; and Captain Nick Tempest, foaming at the mouth, was struggling furiously in the grasp of a huge, fierce-looking dog—who, with one eye on his mistress, was evidently grimly resolved to hold him while he had a tooth in his head.

"Well," said Jacquette, after a pause, during which her eye had followed Disbrowe's, "you've been getting yourself into a scrape, I see, my good cousin. You should not have ridden out, you perceive, until I was ready to go along and take care of you. Gussie, easy, my dear sir!"—to Captain Nick Tempest, who was writhing and cursing at an awful rate—"don't swear so, and don't struggle in that way; for if the broadcloth gives way, perhaps you won't find Lion's teeth very comfortable, and perhaps I shan't be able to keep him from cheating the hangman, and perhaps I won't try either! What is the matter, cousin Alfred, and who is this lying on the ground? Why, he's wounded! Good heavens! has he been shot?"

She leaped off her horse as she spoke, and bent over Jacinto, as Disbrowe knelt down and raised him in his arms. The beautiful face was cold and still as marble, and the lips were blanched to a deadly whiteness. The wounded arm hung heavy and lifeless by his side, and his head fell over Disbrowe's arm as though he were in reality dead.

"Oh, cousin! is he dead?" cried Jacquette, falling on her knees beside him.

"Not dead," said Disbrowe, laying his hand on his heart, which still fluttered faintly; "not dead, but in a swoon; and his arm is shattered, I greatly fear."

"Oh, poor boy—poor boy!" said Jacquette, sorrowfully. "Oh, cousin! who had the heart to do this?"

"That monster there! May Heaven's worst curses light on him!" exclaimed Disbrowe, fiercely. "Where can we bring him, Jacquette? Something must be done immediately."

"Bring him to Fontelle—there is no other place where he can be brought, and it is not more than two miles from this. Lift him before you on your horse, and ride fast. But, tell me how it happened. Did this man intend murdering him?"

"No—no. He intended to murder me; and this poor boy, in his effort to save my life, received the ball meant for me," said Disbrowe, as he raised the almost lifeless and limber form in his arms.

"What a beautiful face!" exclaimed Jacquette, involuntarily—forgetting, for an instant, everything but the wondrous beauty of the lad.

As she spoke, the boy opened his eyes, and they fell full upon the handsome, trouble-faced face bending over him, and, with a faint exclamation, he attempted to rise; but at the motion a spasm of intense pain shot across his pale face, and shuddering through all his frame, his head dropped heavily on Disbrowe's breast.

"My poor boy!" said Disbrowe, compassionately, "do not attempt to rise. Your arm is broken I fear; but I will take you where you will be carefully nursed."

"No. Let me go; put me down—I must go," said the boy, wildly, making another attempt to free himself; but his voice was faint and sharp with agony, and his face twitched convulsively with the almost unbearable pain, and once more he sunk back, white and fainting.

Disbrowe's only reply was to place him upon his horse, and then leap into the saddle; while, with a groan that all his efforts could not repress, the poor boy's head dropped heavily on his shoulder.

"What is to be done with this scoundrel who assailed you?" said Jacquette. "Shall I order Lion to keep him here till we can return with men to arrest him? Eh?"

Captain Tempest's reply to this proposition was an appalling volley of oaths, as his livid face grew a shade more ghostly, and his clenched fist furiously at Jacquette in impatient passion.

"No, let him go; let Captain Tempest go," said Jacquette, faintly, lifting his head for an instant, and then dropping it again.

"Let him go, since the lad desires it," said Disbrowe, after a moment's hesitation.

"I shall be on my guard for the future, and will not be taken at a disadvantage again."

"Very well," said Jacquette, as she fearlessly approached the raving savage; "but first, my dear sir, I will trouble you for that pistol. Before Lion lets you off the limits, you must stand and deliver."

Captain Nick furiously hurled the pistol at her feet.

"Thank you," said Jacquette, coolly, as she picked up the weapon and examined it.

"Loaded, as I heard all right! Here, Lion—here, my boy; let him go!"

The young Englishman, taking advantage of the momentary confusion, made an attempt to wrest the pistol from his enemy's grasp; but the hawk-like eye of Captain Tempest detected the motion, and quick as lightning he sprang back, took deliberate aim, and fired.

"Now, be off at once," shouted Jacquette, in a high, ringing tone of command, as she raised the pistol and kept her bright eye fixed on the outwitted captain. "Vanish, before I am tempted to give you a dose of cold lead, which I would just as lief do. Only I don't want to rob the gallows of its due: Be off!"

Grasping his teeth with impotent passion, the captain obeyed—not knowing how soon the dangerous-looking little desperado might be tempted to fire; and a mocking laugh from Jacquette came wafted after him on the evening breeze, and was the last sound he heard, as he vanished round the brow of the hill.

"The youth has fainted again," said Disbrowe, anxiously, as Jacquette, whistling

her, when Jacquette laughingly caught him, and held him back.

"There now! Don't be vexed. Where's the use of getting cross," she said, in a soothing tone, as if speaking to a spoiled child. "I give you my word of honor, as a lady and a De Vere, that you will see him as soon as it is prudent, and you may then go down on your knees and thank him till all's blue. Meantime, I'll faithfully report to him the terrific pitch of gratitude you've worked yourself up to. There's my hand on it! And now sit down and have your self! That pleasant-spoken gentleman who tried to send you to a better world is Captain Nick Tempest—is it not? 'Old Nick,' as they call him?"

"Yes," said Disbrowe, taking a seat beside her. "Well, who do you think he reminded me of?"

"Can't say—but I know who he reminds me of. He reminds me of—myself!"

"By Jove! my idea to fracture," said Disbrowe, delightedly, "not that you look alike, but somehow!"

"Yes, but we do look alike, though—I'm certain of it—except that I'm rather better looking, I flatter myself. Haven't we got hair alike, now?"

"Oh! but his is red," said Disbrowe, hesitatingly, "and yours—"

"Is red, too," said Jacquette.

"Indeed! I thought it was auburn—beautiful auburn," said Disbrowe, in the lazy tone in which he was accustomed to issue little works of fiction.

"Oh, you did—did you?" said Jacquette; "but then you're only an Englishman, and can't be expected to see till it's far in the day, and then you're not half-wide-awake. Why, I wouldn't have my hair any other color, on any account. It's a good, high-minded, spirited color, and shows people have a decided will of their own; and then it's nice and showy—none of your dismal blacks, nor fady, sickly yellow, nor neutral browns. No, sir, my hair's red, and I'm proud of it!" said Jacquette, shaking her flashing curls from her eyes.

"Well, one thing is certain," said Disbrowe, "you are the first De Vere that ever had red hair, within the memory of man."

"And that's another reason why I'm proud of it. It's time there was a change in the family—they have been going on in the old way long enough, goodness knows! The followers of the Silver Star have been keeping up their obsolete notions long enough, and need a little variety."

"And a more bewitching variety they could not have than Miss Jacquette De Vere," said Disbrowe, softly.

"Humph!" said Jacquette, with a peculiar smile. "Let's change the subject. Are you fond of singing, cousin Alfred? I wish you would sing 'Hear me, Norma.' It is a pretty song."

He half sprang from his seat, and fixed his eyes on her, as if he would read her very heart. She met his gaze unflinchingly, and again her laughing gray eyes reminded him of the picture, there was such an immeasurable depth of mockery shining through, and baffling him.

"I heard you whistling it yesterday," she said, carelessly, "and as it is a favorite of mine, I thought perhaps you might favor me now."

"No, I never sing," he said, half-curtly, as he arose again, and began walking up and down.

"Well, I must leave you, then, and return to my patient," she said, rising. "I will see you at the tea-table, and report progress." And, with a smiling wave of her hand, she was gone.

Disbrowe paced up and down the long hall, in deep thought, until the bell rung for the evening meal. There was a half-puzzled, half-angry look on his face; yet now and then, as if in spite of him, his features would relax into a smile, and his last words were, as he turned to join the family: "I've got no use; I can't read the riddle."

"I have a message for you, cousin," said Jacquette, in a low voice, approaching him when the supper was over.

"Well—I am all attention," said Disbrowe.

"It is from him—you know. He says not to distress yourself over-much with gratitude, as he would merely act as he would have done for any one; and as for your thanks, they will keep, and like gooseberry wine, be all the better for keeping. So make yourself easy, cousin mine."

"I intend to," said Disbrowe, throwing himself into a chair. "Capital advice, that, and I intend to follow it. Do you know, when I marry I expect to repose on a couch of rose-leaves all day long, and make my wife fan me and sing—"

"Hear me, Norma!" broke in Jacquette, with a wicked laugh; and Disbrowe colored, and instantly grew silent.

That evening he heard Jacquette sing for the first time, and a superb voice she had. Augusta, too, swept over the keys of the piano with a master hand, at her father's desire; but an automaton would have done it with as much life. If she had been made of marble she could not have sat more white, and cold, and still than she sat before them there.

Later that evening, Jacquette sang an old English ballad, at the earnest solicitation of Disbrowe—an old song, with a sweet, plaintive air—and, lying lazily back, he watched her with half-closed eyes, and listened to the words:

"And when the Christmas tale goes round,
By moonlight, a poor creature,
The children weep and shrink to hear
How Childe of Phymatoke died."

And then the song goes on to say how the "Old Tor" went a hunting, and how he lost his way on the moor, and of his despair:

"For far and wide the highland lay
One pathless, dreary land of snow.
He passed—the angry heavens above,
The faithless bog below."

"He paused, and set the path all his veins
Life's current feebly ran;
And heavily a mortal sleep
Came o'er the dying man."

"Yet one dear wish, one tender thought
Came o'er that hunter brave—"

Jacquette paused, and rose with a laugh. "Well, that's very pretty! Why don't you go on, and let us know what that tender thought was?" said Disbrowe.

"I was just thinking of your getting lost," she replied, "and was afraid you might think the song personal; besides, you have heard enough of old songs, without me singing them to you."

"There are no songs like them," said Disbrowe. "I would rather hear one old ballad than all the Italian songs that ever a *prima donna* trilled and quavered."

"You think too much of old things," said Jacquette, half-pettishly. "Old names, and old families, and old houses, and old

songs, all alike. For my part, I believe in modern improvements and new sensations altogether."

"And yet I am certain you would rather bear the old name of De Vere than any other under the sun," said Disbrowe.

With a gesture that was almost fierce in its passionate impatience, Jacquette arose and moved to the other side of the room.

"You are a De Vere, my dear boy, if there ever was one," said his uncle, with a smile, "and will marry a countess, I'll be bound!"

"I don't believe there is a countess living I would marry," said Disbrowe, carelessly.

"And why not, pray? A duchess, then," laughed Mr. De Vere.

"Nor a duchess—unless I was in love with her, and she would have me."

"Two very important considerations," said his uncle. "Then you mean to marry for love?"

"I hope so—if I ever do come to that."

"It's an old-fashioned notion! Is that the reason?" said Jacquette, with a curling lip.

"Partly. If ever I see a woman, my equal in every way, and we happen to like one another in a decent, quiet, gentlemanly and lady-like sort of fashion, it is probable we will get married, as well as the rest of the world."

"What a fortunate woman she will be?" said Jacquette, sarcastically. "Have you ever seen her yet, Captain Disbrowe?"

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"Not exactly, Miss Jacquette; for the very serious reason that I very much doubt whether you have a heart at all."

"Because I am insensible to the manifold attractions and fascinations of the Honorable Alfred Disbrowe, and have not fallen down at his feet and worshiped, as so many of my sensible and lovable sex have already done? Is that the reason?" she said, with a short laugh.

"Not at all," said Disbrowe; but it was so near the truth that he had to laugh, too.

"You do not suppose I have such an inordinate share of vanity as to imagine I could ever touch your heart?"

"Well, there's no saying. I think it very

likely you could stretch your faith even to a pinnacle so absurdly high as that. Men are such a set, composed of vanity and whiskers,

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at expiration of subscription.

"A sweeping assertion, that. And am I

set down in that catalogue?" said Disbrowe.

"You? Oh, well, I don't know. I haven't taken the trouble to think about it yet," said Jacquette, in a tone of provoking indifference.

"It is probable that if ever I do, such will be my decision. But look there—and she pointed with her whip—"there is the very Queen of the Kelpies, taking an airing!"

Disbrowe looked, and saw, to his surprise, the little girl Orrie, of the lone house, bounding, flying, leaping, with the agility of a mountain kid, over the rocks—her long, effish locks unbound, and streaming around her little effish face with its supernaturally large, bright, glittering black eyes.

"Hello! little Oriole, by all that's startling. Where did that little Witch of Endor start from? I say, Orrie, Orrie! Come here."

The little girl heard his shout, and, turning round, shaded her eyes with her hand from the sun, and peered at him; then, with a glad cry of recognition, she darted over the rocks, and in an instant had seized the stirrup, swung herself up before him on his horse, flung her arms around his neck, and gave the astonished and laughing young Englishman a crushing hug.

"Upon my word," said Jacquette, "an enthusiastic welcome!"

Orie turned round and peered at Jacquette, and laughed, and nodded, and clung closer to Disbrowe.

"And so you are glad to see me, Orie?" said Disbrowe, still laughing. "Where in the world did you drop from on these bare rocks? Not from the sky?"

"Lor, no!" said Orie, in contempt at the idea. "Old Grizelle whipped me, and I ran off—I always do, when she whips me, the ugly old thing. I shan't go back, either, till it's dark."

"Well, won't she whip you again, then?" said Disbrowe.

"No—Uncle Till won't let her. He'll be there, and he likes me. I wish you would give me a ride on your horse. Will you?"

"Certainly," said Disbrowe, moving on. "Why, Orie, I thought you had forgotten all about me ere this."

"I guess I hasn't," said Orie, soberly, turning round to give him another kiss, and then clapping her hands to make the horse go faster. "I've been thinking about you ever since. Oh! what a nice horse to go this is!"

"And you have no kindly greeting for me, Orie?" said Jacquette. "Is he to receive all your attention?"

"Oh," said Orie, "everybody says you don't care for anybody, and don't want kisses or nothin'."

"And so, because I don't care for anybody, no one is to love me?" said Jacquette, in something so like a sorrowful tone that Disbrowe looked at her, surprised at her hearing the little elf's words.

He spoke to her, but she replied briefly; and for nearly half an hour she rode beside them in silence, and with a sort of dark gloom shadowing her face.

Little Orie prattled continually, giving Disbrowe occasional embraces to fill up the pauses, until Jacquette almost coldly suggested their return.

"There now, Orie, will you be able to find your way back, do you think?" said Disbrowe, as she sprang down in a flying leap.

"Be sure I will," said Orie. "Good-by, I'll come to see you, some day."

"Thank you," said the young gentleman, laughing.

And the next instant she was bounding and hopping like a blackbird from rock to rock.

The same look of dark gloom still lay on the bright face of Jacquette, as they turned toward Fontelle; and until half the way was over, she never spoke, save to briefly answer his questions. At last he said:

"You seem strangely out of spirits, my dear cousin. May I ask what is the matter?"

"I am thinking of that child and her words," said Jacquette. "Somehow, the sight of that little girl always affects me strangely; something in those eerie black eyes of her almost frightens me. A strange feeling, is it not? I wish you could tell me what it means."

"I wish I could," said Disbrowe. "Perhaps she is your spiritual affinity, whatever that is. Frank says she looks like you."

"Who don't I look like?" said Jacquette, looking up and breaking into a laugh. "I am the image of Captain Nick Tempest and little Orie Howlet, and consequently, a cross between a demon and a goblin. I won't think of it, though; and now that being gone, I am myself again. I'll race you home, Cousin Alfred, or have you had enough of racing for one while?"

"No—I must have my revenge, and retrieve my wounded honor. So lead off!"

With a laugh and a cheer, Jacquette started, and both galloped on over "brake, bush and scar," at a reckless, headlong pace, keeping neck and neck until Fontelle was reached.

"Unrevenged yet!" exclaimed Disbrowe, striking an attitude, as Jacquette, declining his aid, leaped lightly off her horse, and ran up the steps and entered the house.

With a saucy nod of her curly head, Jacquette disappeared, and passed on until she reached Augusta's room, and there she paused and knocked softly.

There was no response, and she knocked again, more loudly. Still there was no reply, and Jacquette turned the handle and entered.

And there a terrible sight met her eyes. (To be continued—commenced in No. 57.)

DISTINGUISHED men are composed of great and little qualities. Much of their greatness arises from their struggles against the imperfections of their nature; and their noblest actions are sometimes set forth by the collision of their virtues and foibles.

SATURDAY JOURNAL

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

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THE PRAIRIE AND THE OCEAN.

BY S. M. FRAZIER.

Far away in the West, the distant West,
Where clouds roll over the prairie land,
Where the soft, bright rays of the setting sun
Streak hill and vale with violet and gold;
There Nature rules in beauty supreme,
Surpassing the poet's most gorgeous dream.
Where the broad plain rolls far away from view,
Each swell clothed in a carpet of green,
Bright flowers peep forth in bushes and snow,
Kissed into life, yet modest in mien—
They lips dropping with dew from above—
Emblems of purity—symbols of love.
Life—ah, life!—is but a passing dream,
Lighted by scores of phosphorescent gems,
The green prairie rolls away to the West,
Starred by thousands of flowering stems;
The phosphoric glimmer of the ocean crest
Like the floral glitter on the prairie's breast.
Alike—ah, and yet how unlike they are!
Restless ocean, the sport of the storm;
Where wild inhabitants shrink from the war,
And hide far down in the tempest-tossed sea,
From wind-tossed wave and the thunder's roar,
Where seething surf lashes the rocky shore.
But storms also sweep the prairie at times.
When the wild wind escapes from his cells,
When darkness and gloom envelop the earth;
When the heated air with moisture swells;
When the fierce, red bolt leaps forth from his lair,
And the thunder rocks on the trembling air.
Away! down in the tempest-tossed sea,
Her ocean waves are sheltered from harm;
While the surface groans 'neath the storm-king's
breath.
In her depths below reign a calm.
But where is found for the bird of the plain,
A safe retreat from the wind and the rain?

The Flaming Talisman:

THE UNFULFILLED VOW.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR., ETC.

AUTHOR OF "THE BLACK CRESCENT," "HOODWINKED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.

THE UGLY CONFERENCE.

A—more of mystery—
The solemn hour
Of darkness and light;
Saw fees converted in power;
To plot the blow of rival's hateful guile—
To rob a lover of a lover's smile.

—A. P. M. JR.

As Herwin Reese spoke, the hag's manner altered, somewhat, to a blunt welcome.

He brushed past her, and, without waiting until she had closed the door, continued on to a room beyond, where he threw himself into a chair.

The apartment wore an aspect of comfort and luxury combined, with every conceivable appurtenance to the furniture of a thoroughly-arranged bed-chamber.

It was the sleeping-room of Meg Semper. When she had re-bolted, re-locked and barred the door, she joined him.

"Ha!" she cried, striding up to him, and bending down to peer closely into his face; "what brings you here now? Do you know it's long after midnight? You're gloomy, too. You won't speak. Tell me what's wrong? Hey?" and her voice, at first loud, harsh, chattering, settled to a low hiss of inquiry.

"What's the matter, I say? And you came in bareheaded! Devils I speak out."

"I am driven to madness!" suddenly cried the valet, with such vehemence that Meg Semper started back from her stooping posture.

"Heigho!"—distending her eyes, and throwing her brows into the shape of an inverted triangle—"you're mad, eh? So you look like it. Now, what are you mad about?"

Reese began pacing the room, to and fro.

"Every thing!" he muttered, between his grinding teeth.

"Oho! 'every thing' is a good deal.

Now, sit down. What is it?"

He resumed his chair and said, more calmly.

"Nemil delivered the letter to-day—"

"He did! He did! Yes—and I've got the money."

"Father and son have had a quarrel, in consequence—"

"Good! Ha! h—a! That's what we want!"

"Mervin Darnley, it seems, has learned much of his son's recent habits, and the letter was as a lighted match to the magazine. I was called in to-night to give testimony."

"That's good, too! Well?"

Reese began pacing the room, to and fro.

"Or course I told all I knew." His eyes glittered, venomously, and Meg Semper chuckled lowly.

"But," he added, "the culmination of the affair is, I've been discharged."

"Eh? That's bad," she commented, frowning.

"More—I was kicked from the house."

"What?" yelped Meg Semper, the frown upon her wrinkled forehead deepening to a scowl.

"Ay, with a kick and a blow, I was knocked from the steps to the middle of the street. O—h! curses—curses!" and his hands clenched till the nails sunk in the flesh.

"Who did it? Who did it?" hissed, cried, snarled the hag, her eyes snapping fiercely, and her features distorting in excitement.

"Reginald Darnley—curse him!"

"Reginald Darnley!" she fairly howled; "and he did it—he kicked you? By Satan! and I had him at my knife-point only this night?"

"What do you mean?"

"He would have killed him then; but the Talisman saved his life, as it has done twice before. I'm mad with thinking of the 'curse' thing!"

"Orle used it?"

"Yes. Who else? But there's only three left, now—only three! When they're gone, too, nothing can prevent me keeping my oath! And I'll keep it sooner, unless she watches me close—I will."

"I think it's better to follow my plan, Meg," he said, studiously.

"But it may take too long—that's all. Devils a-loose! My oath was to kill him. If you want to do it your way, then keep him out of my sight. I can't think of any thing but killing him, when I see him!" Her mouth twitched nervously, her eyes were ablaze with a demon look.

"Don't work yourself into a frenzy."

"I can't help it. I'll have his life—I will!"

"Not if I can prevent it!" interrupted a voice.

Orle Deice stood in the doorway. "Thought you'd gone to bed?" screamed the hag, in surprise.

"I heard a knock," said Orle, advancing, "and was curious to know who it could be. Besides, you are talking in a voice to rouse the dead. It is fortunate that this house stands alone, and again fortunate that the walls are thick—or you would have some

one searching out the cause of such disturbance. What brings you here, Herwin Reese?"

"Orle—" His eyes were fixed upon her in a passionate gaze; his mien softened.

"Tell me what brings you here?" she repeated, as he hesitated while studying her charms.

"I am discharged."

"Discharged?"

"Yes, Orle; and have been kicked from the house of the Darnleys."

"Kicked! What for?"

"Because—" A quick, warning glance from Meg Semper checked him; and the hag spoke:

"Yes, Orle Deice, Herwin had to tell of your lover's bad habits—that's all. And Reginald has kicked him out for 't!'" Here she burst into a loud, sepulchral laugh, but added, immediately:

"And, Herwin, her lover's give her the mitt! He's left her! Ha! h—a! There's a row now. She hates him some, I guess. What are you going to do, Orle Deice?"

"No, Meg Semper, I do not hate him. I still love him. He is still mine. But, stop this question. You ask me what I shall do. It is partly that you question which brings me here. You say Nemil is in bed?"

"Nemil? Yes—obstinate tiger!—he

wouldn't stop to take his wine, he was so tired when he came in."

"Wake him up."

"Ho! Wake him up? But you'll have him mad!"

"No matter. I must see him at once, while my bosom is warm with hate for this girl—Cecilia Bernard!"

"Business be cursed! I'm tired. Can't keep on my feet for all time—nor can anybody else! D'you know that?"

"Tush, Nemil! you're an ass!" cried Meg.

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"A matter of business, Nemil," returned Orle, authoritatively.

But her tone was far from quieting, for he exclaimed, with a savage growl and a grunt:

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tresses at his shoulder. Quickly averting her eyes, she said:

"You draw too abrupt an inference."

The evasive words were lost upon him.

"Your hand trembles on my arm—Cecilia."

"Trembles—"

"Yes, I am satisfied now. Come—I have fixed my resolve; listen—"

"Let us return to the house, Mr. Waldron."

"And disappoint the birds that sing now, for your especial pleasure? How ungenerous that would be! Here is a seat. Sit down; I beg."

She yielded to his request, though seeming anxious to avoid what was pending. She knew what was eager to escape his lips, knew that he would whisper words of love and devotion; the quick perception of a cultivated mind had discovered this.

"Miss Bernard—Cecilia," he said, presently; "it's now over six months since I became a visitor at your father's house. During that time, I have learned to love you. It is of that love I would speak."

"Your love, Mr. Waldron?" with a slight start, and voice not so even as it might have been.

"Yes," he interrupted, fervently. "Now, will you not let me plead this love? My every hope is centered—"

"Hush!" her voice low, and manner of one ill at ease—"do not speak of this, Mr. Waldron—do not."

"Nay, listen, while I tell you how dear you are to me; while I tell you what life will be to me without you—"

"No, no; cease. I can not—I have no right to listen!"

The gaze was one; their eyes volumed that sweet, subtle power which links hearts in a bond of mutual affection.

But there was an unrest in her glance; something marred the pleasure of her thoughts.

Then, yielding to the warmth that swelled each fiber of her system, she pillow'd her head upon his breast.

"Let me know my fate, darling. But should I ask?—I see you are already mine—speak; am I right?"

"I do love—oh! no; no; what am I saying! I must not love you."

"Must not! In Heaven's name!—I asked too late for that which I so fondly hoped to call my own? Unsay those words, Cecilia."

"No—no; I must not love—and yet—"

"Ah, yet?"

"I do love you, for my heart will have it so!"

Her words were quick, short-breathed; the luster of her eyes was dimmed; there was a sob in her voice, which only a painful effort could restrain.

In a passionate impulse, he drew her unresisting form closer to him, and felt the fair frame quiver in his embrace.

Quickly, however, she disengaged herself, as if ashamed of the part she had acted, and started to her feet.

"I forgot myself!" she exclaimed, in confusion. "Let us retire to the house at once."

"No, not forgotten yourself, but told me that I have won your heart. I am not fully answered, yet. Your hand now, Cecilia—will you give it, also?"

"Do not press this subject, Mr. Waldron. Come; please return to the house."

"Will you not give me a definite answer?" he persisted, mildly.

"You are cruel. I have begged you to desist."

As they retraced their steps along the gravel path, he asked:

"Why do you evade me in this, Cecilia?"

"Because it is my duty."

"Duty? Why, if your heart is given, do you refuse the answer which I believe is justly due? Will you tell me this?"

"No." The reply was low, but firm.

"Will you not confide in me? Tell me why, how you love, and will not plight a lover's troth."

"I have nothing to confide, Mr. Waldron."

"But you love me?"

"Yes," was the soft, impulsive answer, and the weight on his arm grew heavier.

A thrill of joy passed over him; but it was doomed to an abrupt dispelment, for she added:

"It must end there. I am wrong in admitting it, and you must forget it. I can never be your wife."

For a second, he was dumb.

"Love me as you do!" he exclaimed; "and can not, will not be my wife? In the name of Heaven!—what mystery is this?"

"Mr. Waldron—cease—show mercy. Do not rend my heart by continuing this conversation."

"But, tell me what you mean. Will you not give me a hope?"

"I can not! I can not!"

He was silent. How strange it seemed to him, that he could possess the fair girl's love, hear her, in unmistakable syllables, declare a reciprocation of his affection, yet hear of an impediment to their marriage.

What mysterious power limited the heart and action to attest a love, while it compelled the lips to utter impossibility of holy unison.

When they reached the steps leading to the vine-clad porch, she would have retained his arm; but he halted.

"Cecilia, I must bid you good-day."

"So soon?"—quickly, and surprised.

"I have already stayed too long. Pleasant dreams by day and night, until we meet again," though his voice was broken, dispirited.

She must have seen how keen his disappointment; she must have felt anxious, for she detained him, to say, while she looked roundly up into his face:

"Harry, we part friends, do we not? You will come again—soon? Oh! if you did but know how terrible it is for me to learn your love, to return that love, yet be unable to bestow my hand!—you are not angry?"

"I can not so far forget that I am a gentleman, Cecilia."

An emotion worked within his breast as he listened to her words—so full of love and yet so wounding. His lips moved, as if to plead anew the cause which seemed hopeless; he would have clasped her to him. But, with a mighty effort, he refrained.

Another parting word, a bow that was distant, even icy, and he departed.

A few steps, and he looked back. She stood where he had left her, her face buried in her hands, and a low sobbing reached his ears.

Should he return? Irresolute, he paused; the next instant he passed on, out at the rose-twined gate.

Cecilia stood, for a long time, solitary and weeping.

From the interchange of loving words, the soft sigh, the fond caress, the magnetic touch of lip to lip—from these we know that her heart was given to Henry Waldron. Given wholly? Wait.

When the tear-dimmed eyes had partially regained their former lustre, and the heavy bosom was schooled to cease its throbbing, she glanced toward the gate, half expecting to see him lingering there, waiting for a sign, a murmured "come," that would recall him. But he was gone.

Slowly, sadly she turned from the spot and entered the house.

Alone in the privacy of her room, the anguish of a fettered spirit asserted itself.

She advanced to a small casket on a table near her bedside, and drew forth two daguerreotypes. As she gazed upon them, her sobbing grew more violent.

"Oh, God!" she moaned, "tell me my own heart. Tell me—tell me, which of these do I love best?" They fell from her hand, and, sinking back upon her bed, she buried her face in the downy pillow, as if to shut from her vision that which caused her misery.

The two pictures were Henry Waldron and Reginald Darnley—the latter her affianced; though she knew not the true character of the man to whom her hand was pledged.

Her heart leaned equally toward each—she loved both Waldron and Darnley in that depth of Heaven-wrought passion alone consonant with the fervor of a pure, guileless woman. And this her misery: knowing that she loved one as the other—perhaps Darnley a little less than when she had given him a lover's promise.

At the dinner-hour, Lacy Bernard and his wife missed the sunny presence of their child.

A servant was dispatched up-stairs, who returned with the information that Cecilia had fled.

Mrs. Bernard sought her daughter. She saw that the rosy tinge was gone from her cheeks, knew she was not well.

Cecilia would not speak her secret.

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but the man's quiet indifference recalled him to himself.

"What do you propose?"

"I want you to get her here to the mill. I know its crannies of old. There are snug corners enough, which, with a little work, will answer the purpose and be tight as a trap."

Peters stiffened at the suggestion, until his sinewy frame was rigid as cast steel.

"I can't have a woman's eyes and tongue agog here," he said, sullenly. "Make it any other crib, and I'm your man."

"There's not another such a place in the country," Reginald declared. "It will be but for a few days, Peters, and I pledge myself that nothing to your detriment shall come through it. Come, I'll make it well worth your while. Say a hundred dollars for getting her here, and as much more for the time she stays. You'll not soon make another two hundred so easily."

"The pay's good enough," Luke said, slowly. "He was thinking to himself, "Why not? It may be the means of saving her? A woman might cheer her up—anyway, it will do no harm."

So he said, aloud:

"If you agree to see me safely through, I'll do as well by you. It's a bargain, then! Who is the bit of dimity I am to secure for you?"

"It is Miss Ellesford, of the Grange. Remember, my man, you are to treat her with every respect!"

He then proceeded to give a minute description of Adria's personal appearance and daily habits. He left Peters to decide upon his own course in accomplishing the abduction.

"To-morrow night, if possible," he concluded. "I have a reason for wishing to hasten the affair!"

This reason at that moment lay in his pocket, in shape of a note from Hastings. It announced his return to Crofton, and his intention of presenting a speedy appearance at the Grange. He had received no replies to his numerous letters, but attributed this fact to his own uncertain locations.

While Reginald, yet lingered, there came the sound of horse's hoofs borne down from the beaten bridle-path. With a last, hasty word, he plunged into a thicket of scrubby undergrowth, making his way homeward over the barren fields. A moment later his father, Colonel Templeton, drew rein almost upon the very spot he had so lately quitted.

Coincidences are of not rare occurrence. Plotting and counter-plotting frequently defeat each other unawares.

Strangely enough, Colonel Templeton, though actuated by entirely opposite motives, was here upon the self-same mission that had brought his son.

"She must be removed," he had said to Valeria. Who so well fitted to undertake the task as his old ally, Luke Peters? What place so well calculated to furnish secure shelter, yet remain free of suspicion, as the ruined old mill?

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 85.)

OLD GRIZZLY,
The Bear-Tamer:
OR, THE
WILD HUNTRESS OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

BY CAPT. J. F. C. ADAMS,
AUTHOR OF "THE BOY TRAPPER," "THE BLACKFOOT
QUEEN;" OR, OLD NICK WHIFFLES IN
THE VALLEY OF DEATH," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.
THE TEST.

"THIS way, quick!" cried Old Grizzly, catching the huntress' hand, and darting off through the bushes.

Affred Badger, supporting Silver Tongue, closely followed, while the rear was brought up by Hammond and Leaping Elk, who appeared determined to stand by his new friends.

As the last left the rock, the sound of the advancing warriors' feet could be plainly heard as they dashed over the hard, level ground that lay between the village and the rendezvous.

Since the first alarm no yell had been uttered, but this only rendered the danger greater, as the fugitives could not tell in what direction to expect the attack.

They were men not easily daunted by seemingly imminent danger.

Knowing every inch of the ground, Old Grizzly led the way, not only with absolute certainty, but by the nearest cuts and turns, so as to gain as much time as possible.

As long as they could keep within the ravine, there was no chance of discovery, but the reader will remember that it only ran a comparatively short distance of the way that must be traversed.

From the ravine they must emerge upon the open prairie, and there, they knew, discovery was almost certain.

"Hyer, take the woman," said the bear-tamer to the Avenger. "You an' the boyee wi' the gal push on ahead. Make for the timber *below* it, mind, *below* it, an' then feel yur' way up under Kiver. As to yur," he said, turning to Leaping Elk, "you jess scot outen this. Yur can't do no good, an' ef yur people find out that yur've been helpin' us, thar'll be entomatoes to pay."

Always thoughtful of others, even in such an emergency, the bear-tamer sought to save the lad from harm, and we may say here that he succeeded, for Leaping Elk got back to the village undetected.

When this disposition had been made, Old Grizzly bade the others push ahead, while he tried to divert attention to himself, Alfred and Hammond, with their charges, pushed ahead up the ravine, while Old Grizzly, turning square off, breasted the hill-side, and soon emerged upon the open prairie under the full light of the moon. As he had expected, he was instantly sighted by the pursuing Blackfeet, who, not knowing that there were others, turned off and began a keen pursuit of the daring man.

This was what Old Grizzly desired, and, with a chuckle, and muttering: "You'll hev a good time a-gittin' me," sprung away toward the mountain, where lay the home of the Wild Huntress, with a speed that soon left the swiftest warrior far in the rear.

Taking advantage of this diversion, the remaining fugitives left the ravine, stole swiftly across the open ground, gained the foothill, and finally reached the timber, as directed, some distance below the bear-tamer's camp.

Here they were safe, and, in the course of half an hour, were seated within the enclosure anxiously awaiting Old Grizzly's return.

It was toward midnight before the deep bark of the watch-dog told of some one ad-

vancing, and a moment later, the bear-tamer himself stood within the secure walls of his castle.

A few words sufficed to explain his escape, and then the hunters drew off, leaving mother and daughter alone.

Those two, so long severed, sat for hours locked in each other's arms, recounting their past experiences, talking in low, hushed voices, of the dead husband and father, and laying plans that were to govern the future.

At length wearied nature gave way, and all sought a sleeping-place, the women with the men without the cavern.

Morning dawned bright and clear, and soon the little camp was alive with busy preparations.

The old bear-tamer was preparing to defend his castle, for he well knew that the Blackfeet would not give up their chief's daughter without a deadly struggle.

And he was right. While they were snatching a hasty repast, the warning bark of the watchful sentinel told them that the struggle was near at hand.

"Up with ye, an' group yur' weepins, fur I tell yur' thar's goin' to be Ole Scratch to pay!" cried Old Grizzly, grasping his rifle and running down to the entrance, into which he disappeared.

When he reached the further end and peered out from behind the rock that lay in front, a startling scene met his eye.

"Faggots an' flints! the hill tribe, men, women an' children, ar' out!" he exclaimed over his shoulder to Alfred and the Avenger, who had just come up. "Jest take a peek an' see what yur thinks uv it!"

Alfred looked out, and almost instantly exclaimed:

"Here comes an Indian with a flag of truce."

"Ar' that so?" quickly asked Old Grizzly. "Wal, I didn't look fur that, nowhow! It ar' better I hoped fur. Yur' see they don't like to tackle me an' the b'ars, an' I don't much blame 'em."

"They think you are a big Medicine," said Hammond, quietly. "That is the true reason of their not attacking."

"Wal, I guess yur' e' bout right. Enny-way, here's the red-skin, an' we'll soon know what ar' up."

As he ceased speaking Iron Heel, for it was that gallant warrior, stepped briskly forward, carrying in his hand a piece of bleached buckskin and halted some few feet in front.

"What do e' want, red-skin?" asked Old Grizzly, walking out and advancing to where the Indian stood.

"The Man of the Bears came like a thief, and when it was night stole the daughter of the chief. I have come for her," was the stern reply.

"Then a dod-durned lie, red-skin," exclaimed the old trapper, angrily, "an' you didn't the white thing in yur' hand, I'd tell it down yur' throat!"

"Where is Silver Tongue, the daughter of Big Hand?" asked Iron Heel, calmly.

"In that," shouted the bear-tamer, "an' that sh'll stay till she wants to leave uv her own wantin'. I tell you what, red-skin—"

"The warriors call me Iron Heel," said the Indian.

"Wal, then, Mr. Iron Heel, I'll tell you what I'll do. You go an' fetch Big Hand. He may see the gal, an' e' wants to go back wi' him why well an' good, he may have her—but stop," as the Indian turned hastily away, "if she don't want to go back, ain't willin', you know, why then she'll be let alone to go whar she wants to. Do ye agree to that?"

"Big Hand will answer the Man of the Bears," replied the warrior, striding rapidly away.

In the course of half an hour he again appeared, this time accompanied by the head chief of the tribe.

Big Hand was evidently fearfully inclined, but as the Avenger had said, he considered Old Grizzly too much of a Medicine to quarrel with, if it could be avoided.

To him the bear-tamer made the same proposition, to which the chief readily agreed, thinking that his child would be only too glad to fly to his arms.

"You agree to the bargain. No back-down," inquired Old Grizzly.

"Big Hand has spoken. His tongue is not forked and it can not lie," was the haughty response.

"Fetch out the gal an' the woman," said the bear-tamer, taking his rifle. He had no intention of allowing any treachery.

In a few moments Silver Tongue and her mother appeared.

When the former beheld her adopted father, of whom she was very fond, she ran forward and clasped her arms round his brawny neck.

"Ugh!" said the Indian, while his face gleamed with pleasure.

"Hold on, old ha'r-lifter, an' see it out. Ax her to go home," cried Old Grizzly.

"The lodge of the chief is dark, without his child. She will come and bring back the sunshine?" he said, interrogatively.

The change in the manner of the young girl, from joy, to apparently the deepest sorrow, was instantaneous. Without a word she unbound her arms, kissed the chief's forehead, and turning, walked back to her mother's side and took her hand.

The whole action was so replete with meaning that no further demand was made.

Old Grizzly stepped forward and explained the state of affairs to the sorrowing chief. He knew it to be true, and, without any effort at persuading, or even speaking to Silver Tongue again, he pulled his blanket about his head, and, followed by all the Indians, took his way back to the village.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE NEW LIFE.—CONCLUSION.

A BEAUTIFUL, sunshiny day in early summer was closing over the spurs of the Rocky Mountains, when a party of four encamped upon a small stream where a dense grove of timber afforded them shelter, while a rich carpet of grass gave ample food to the horses that they had been riding.

The party were Richard Hammond, known to our readers as the Red Avenger; Ross Hammond, the Wild Huntress; her recovered daughter, Agnes; and Alfred Badger, the accepted lover of the young girl.

Some days previous they had parted from Old Grizzly and Leaping Elk, and were now journeying toward California, where they proposed making their home.

It was a hard struggle for Alfred to part from his old friend and companion in many a dangerous adventure, but love proved stronger than friendship, and so he followed the maiden and left the friend.

But he had left the bear-tamer under favorable auspices.

It was toward midnight before the deep bark of the watch-dog told of some one ad-

venturing, and a moment later, the bear-tamer himself stood within the secure walls of his castle.

The day following the visit of the Blackfeet, a grand council had been held, to which the whites were invited.

Here a treaty of peace between Old Grizzly and the Indians had been entered into, by which the former was assured of their friendship, so long as he remained friendly to the future.

Silver Tongue was present, and the parting between her and her father was most affecting, though the old warrior tried hard to conceal his emotion. The young girl had been greatly loved by all the tribe, and when she mounted the white horse to ride back to the bear-camp, she found three others standing by—a gift from the tribe.

Not only this, but many valuable furs, ornaments, etc., had been contributed, so that she would not have to go to the altar a dowerless bride.

By consent of his father, Leaping Elk was to take up his abode with the "Great Medicine of the Bears," so Old Grizzly was not left entirely alone.

The journey to California was not made without many hardships and much danger, but the little party at length arrived at San Francisco in safety. Here Alfred and Agnes Hammond were married, and the following summer the same ceremony was performed for Richard Hammond and Rosa—the Wild Huntress of the Hills.

THE END.

Drawing Lots.

A RECOLLECTION.

BY WALTER A. ROSE.

But his comrades are past the suicidal epoch; the love of life with them is strong, indeed.

"If you want to die so bad, why not do it to save us?" says one.

It is what I have been fearing for hours. Each dreaded to advance the proposal until the unhappy lad's words broke the ice. Now they all take it up, and the dreadful desire for food of any kind has stifled all other feelings in their hearts.

The lad is cowed now; he could face death with his comrades; but the thought of his body providing food for his fellow-men is too horrible. I see his danger, for a weapon gleams in the sunlight. I reach forward to seize the glittering blade, but I can not parry the blow. With a cry, the boy falls across the gunwale, stabbed to the heart!

Like a pack of hungry vampires, the sea-men strive to such the wound from which the youth's warm life-blood wells up; but dreading its effect on themselves—knowing it will madden their brains—I suddenly rip the corpse overboard, and it sinks from our gaze. A torrent of imprecations are rained upon my head, and threats are uttered against me!

"Minnie!"

"He knows me, doctor! Thank God, he will yet survive!"

"Darling!"

"Yes, Harry, yours, and yours only."

"No, dearest, aboard the United States ship Susquehanna; she rescued us the day after you killed the bird."

"Do you love me, Minnie?"

"Would I kiss you like this if I did not, Harry?"

"Better let my patient remain as tranquil as possible, Miss Everett. He needs quiet now, and you will doubtless have ample opportunity in after years to be affectionate to each other."

"I hope so, doctor!"

And we have!

"It was his self-abnegation that so nearly killed him; he shot a bird on the last night of our terrible trials; but he gave its flesh and blood to me, though he was suffering all the agonies of starvation and torture of thirst."

Light comes, the voices bring it back! The golden vails are withdrawn. Bending over me is an angelic face—the face of her I love; yellow curls cluster and sweep over my brow.

"Minnie!"

"He knows me, doctor! Thank God, he will yet survive!"

"Darling!"

"Are we in heaven?"

"No, dearest, aboard the United States ship Susquehanna; she rescued us the day after you killed the bird."

"Do you love me, Minnie?"

"Would I kiss you like this if I did not, Harry?"

"Better let my patient remain as tranquil as possible, Miss Everett. He needs quiet now, and you will doubtless have ample opportunity in after years to be affectionate to each other."

"I hope so, doctor!"

And we have!

TO ADVERTISERS.

NIGHT IN THE SIERRAS.

THE CAMP-FIRE.

BY E. W. DRUMMOND.

Red sink the sun that night afar,
Behind the snow-robed summit peak,
We saw uprising moon and star,
When you above, and the night
A round your sides long shadows walling
The Day his lingering robes allow.

Toward the dim wild west was trailling
As twilight fell we heard the quall.
Away on whirling pinions as fast
To join his mate whose anxious call
Rang shrilly down the mountain wall.

And the low, deep drum note of the grouse,
When you above, and the night
A round your sides long shadows walling
The Day his lingering robes allow.

He had scarcely finished when Torrequo reappeared on deck, enveloped in a black cloak.

He approached Roper—the most thorough sailor on the ship—and requested to be rowed to the city. The pirate did not note the flash of the greedy sailor's dark eyes, and a minute later they were breasting the waves in a little boat.

"There's a reward of ten thousand dollars for Torrasquez Torrequo, dead or alive," he said, quietly, turning to the woman. "He thought I was dead. He shot me last night; but the ball merely grazed my temple, and when I recovered I easily swam to the city."

Half an hour later a physician stood over little Hulda Ellsworth, and despite the progress the disease had made, she recovered.

When Tom Roper witnessed her recovery by her bereaved parents, he refused to accept the large reward offered for her recovery; but took that offered for the pirate chief, and left the Crescent City, with more than one of Torrequo's avenging followers upon his track.

But he baffled them, and ultimately died a natural death in Baltimore.

Shortly after Hulda's restoration, her sister, released from her vow, wedded the man of her choice, and nine years later, the beautiful belle of New Orleans—Hulda Ellsworth—was united to a man upon whom our nation has conferred great honors.

The Scourge of the Gulf led his sailor a weary chase; but, at last, Tom was rewarded by seeing him enter a forbidden house, in the Spanish quarter of the city. For an hour, Roper tried to peep beyond the walls, but in vain. The interior of the structure was a sealed book to him, and at length, but not disheartened, he turned away and sought the boat.

An hour later Torrequo returned, and in silence Tom pulled for the ship.

When the boat struck the vessel's side, the pirate gained the deck with an agility unknown to Tom, who, presently rose, to follow.

"Traitor!" cried Torrequo, bending over the taffrail, with a pistol in his hand. "I have dared to spy the movements of your chief; and thus I punish unfaithful dogs!"

A bright flash illuminated the waves, and with a shriek, Tom Roper fell headlong from the boat.

Satisfied with the result of his shot, the Spaniard sheathed the smoking pistol in his bosom, and sought a pirate's couch and a pirate's dreams.

When morning broke upon the waves, Tom Roper's body was not to be seen, and the boat was just discernible, drifting afar out to sea.

Thus had perished a pirate's golden dreams.

At least Torrequo thought thus.

At the period of which I write the cholera

had broken out in the Crescent City.

BY CAPT. BRUNI ADAMS.

LONG after Austin, the present capital of Texas, had become to be quite a "city," it was, at times, subjected to flying visits from the Comanches, whose country lay to the west and north-westward, and, on more than one occasion, men and women were stricken down in the very heart of the town, or else carried off to a captivity that was far worse than death itself.

Hardly, however, had the last man gotten safely under cover, before an exclamation was heard from one of the rangers, and following the direction indicated by his outstretched arm, they looked eastward across the level prairie.

The trail was leading due west, and so continued until it crossed the west fork of the Pecan River, but from thence it swerved gradually to the north-west.

"Horse-head Crossing" exclaimed one of the older scouts, and, without further parley, they left the trail, turned slightly to the left, skirting the southern foot of the long range of hills, and rode, with loose reins, direct for the well-known ford.

By noon of the day following, the dark line along the western horizon showed they were approaching the Rio Pecan. It was the timber skirting the river. It now became necessary to ascertain if the Indians had yet come up and crossed.

Bending a little to the southward, so as to strike the timber at a point some distance below the crossing, they reached the timber without having discovered any signs of those they were in pursuit of.

Hardly, however, had the last man gotten safely under cover, before an exclamation was heard from one of the rangers, and following the direction indicated by his outstretched arm, they looked eastward across the level prairie.

They were the Comanche warriors, and the peculiar motion was caused by the "lope" of their mustangs, a gait in which a plain Indian always rides.

Then ensued a wild dash through the

thick timber and matted chapparal, as the rangers sought to obtain a position from whence the Indians could be surrounded.

The Comanches rode steadily forward, evidently certain that the pursuit was far behind.

The edge of the timber was reached, the rangers had gathered their reins for a sudden dash, when the warning voice of their leader stayed the movement.

"Stayed!" he exclaimed. "By all that's lucky, they're going to halt!"

Hephaston, pleased with such disinterestedness, requested that they would name some person of the royal family who might remember, when he was king, that it was they who had placed the crown on his head. The brothers had observed that several persons, through ambition, had aspired to this distinguished rank, and to obtain it had paid servile court to Alexander's favorites. Disregarding, however, all the advantages which the power of nominating to a throne gave them, they declared that they did not know any person more worthy of the diadem than one Abdalonimus, who was descended, though remotely, from the royal line, but who, at the same time, was so poor that he was obliged to get his bread by daily labor in a garden without the city; his honesty and integrity having made him disregard many advantageous offers, and reduced him to his extreme poverty.

Hephaston, trusting to their choice, the two brothers went in search of Abdalonimus with the royal garments, and found him weeding his garden. They saluted him king, and one of them addressing him, said:

"You must now change your tatters for the dress I have brought you. Put off the mean and contemptible habit in which you have grown old. Assume the garments of a prince; but when you are seated on the throne, continue to preserve the virtue which made you worthy of it. And when you shall have ascended it, and by that you mean become the supreme dispenser of life and death over all your citizens, be sure never to forget the condition in which, or rather for which, you were elected."

Abdalonus looked upon the whole as a dream, and, unable to guess the meaning of it, asked if they were not ashamed to ridicule him in that manner? But, as he made a greater resistance than suited their inclinations, they themselves washed him, and threw over his shoulders a purple robe, richly embroidered with gold; and, after repeated oaths of their being in earnest, they conducted him to the palace. The news of this was immediately spread over the whole city. Most of the inhabitants were overjoyed at it; but some murmured, especially the rich, who, despising Abdalonimus' former abject state, could not forbear showing their resentment in the king's court. Alexander commanded the newly-elected prince to be sent for; and after surveying him attentively a long while, spoke thus: "Thy air and mien do not contradict what is related of thy extraction; but I should be glad to know with what frame of mind thou didst bear thy poverty." "Would to the gods," replied he, "that I may bear this crown with equal patience. These hands have procured me all I desired; and while I possessed nothing, I wanted nothing." This answer gave Alexander a high idea of Abdalonimus' virtue; so that he presented him not only with all the rich furniture which had belonged to Strato, and part of the Persian plunder, but likewise annexed one of the neighboring provinces to his dominions.

He had scarcely finished when Torrequo reappeared on deck, enveloped in a black cloak.

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